

# PEACE NEWS

No. 545 November 22, 1946 2d.

## "THE CRISIS OF CULTURE"

### Our "mission": to mediate between Powers

*The problem of peace as we now face it is a cultural one. Culture in the proper sense is nothing highbrow: it is simply the spirit in which the common life of co-operation is carried on in any community: the personal significance that it has for its members. It is what turns a mere co-operation in work into a human fellowship.*

THIS was the view of John MacMurray, Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Edinburgh, speaking at a National Peace Council meeting in Kingsway Hall on Friday last.

"Before the last war we often said that another war would mean the end of civilisation. Now we are beginning to say it again. Perhaps we were right before. The second world war has made an end of what we mean by civilisation."

For 2,000 years the effective initiative in human history had lain with Western Europe. The Roman Empire began it, and it had lasted until our day. Creative tensions had operated within it—in the modern period between France and Germany.

"This has ended. Germany can no longer be the source of a world struggle. Western Europe has lost the initiative, and the creative tension is now between the USA and the USSR. The stage is definitely set for the formation of a world society."

Our world must become a co-operative system. This was a political and economic matter; a question of organisation. But whether and in what degree it was to be a free co-operation was a cultural question which could not be solved politically and economically, by planning. It depended upon a common understanding and a common sentiment of fellowship; in a word upon the formation of a common tradition. And most of the world lay beyond Western European traditions of culture.

It was no use thinking that the world could be united by the imposition of Western culture and Western tradition upon the rest of the world. We can provide only the techniques of organisation. To attempt this would be to adopt a policy of imperialism, and to make war with Russia inevitable—for Russia lay outside the Western orbit. She had never been within the Roman Empire.

If a third world war were to be avoided the urgent task was to facilitate cultural understanding between the West and the East. By her geographical tradition and by her history and temper Britain was better fitted for this mission than any other country. "She can undertake it in proportion as she gives up the effort to be a competitor with the USA and the USSR for world power and sets out to be the cultural mediator in the formation of a world community."

### FOOD PARCELS FOR GERMANY?

The Minister of Food, Mr. John Strachey, was questioned in the Commons on Monday about the prohibition of the export of private food parcels from this country.

He replied that the question is "again under review." The countries concerned include "Germany and Austria."

(See "To Help the Hungry," page 2).

# WHY WE SHOULD RENOUNCE WAR

THE War is not over, it has only begun. Outside China and Palestine, the "shooting war" has stopped, but the "war of nerves" continues. Not a nation dare disarm. Everywhere the energy of three generations—the youngest is not spared—is being devoted to the production and practice of deadlier weapons of destruction. Communist Russia has occupied the place left by Nazi Germany—in the map of the East and the mind of the West. There is armistice, but no peace.

by

F. A. LEA

say that one mortal sin is more mortal than another is like saying that of two circles one is the more round.

For centuries, nations have been governed by the doctrine of "the lesser evil": and what has it come to mean? That in war-time any means, however ruthless, can be justified, if only the enemy has used it first. He has thereby proved himself the more immoral, and his victory the greater disaster.

But the competition in bestiality to which this gives rise has reached a point at which "greater" and "lesser" are meaningless. On the level at which wars are fought now, there is no distinction, that conscience can realise, between the means we are commanded to employ. War has become an absolute evil, and there is nothing left but to renounce it.

If the sense of good and evil, upon which the fate of mankind depends, is to survive at all, that is the first step—whatever the outcome may be. That simple sense, which we call conscience, is precarious enough as it is. The Faith that once confirmed it has failed. Over wide areas of Europe its validity is openly denied—and new faiths have arisen, with new conscienceless codes of morality. Everywhere it has been weakened and undermined. And what has undermined it is war. Nazism and Communism themselves were the offspring of war; but for the sanctification of unlimited violence in 1914-18, they would never have won their ascendancy. To renounce war, therefore, is the indispensable first step towards cutting the roots of totalitarian tyranny itself.

### Conscience

Conscience resides nowhere but in the hearts of individual men and women. It is not a property of the State, the Party, or any organisation whatever. Only individual men and women can vindicate it, by act or word. We appeal to all, however young, who know in their heart of hearts that the deeds to which they commit themselves, when they surrender to military service, are deadly to the knowledge of right and wrong, to have the courage of their conviction: renounce those deeds once for all, before ever you are called

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In itself that does not justify pacifism. The battle of 1939-45 was not fought to end war for ever, whatever the propagandists may have said. It was fought, by the clearer-headed British soldier, to ward off a threat of imminent conquest, and give us a chance to advance once more in the tradition of freedom and arts of peace. After all, mankind has never been able to look forward to a period of permanent safety, and that has not prevented those who retained their freedom from making discoveries of value, in the intervals between one holocaust and the next.

We who believe also that life without freedom, of speech, assembly and worship, would not be worth living, sympathise deeply with those who maintained in 1939, and maintain now, that war is a lesser evil than totalitarian tyranny. Health and security are needful if we are to take full advantage of these freedoms (and a Communist dictatorship might give us both), but health and security bought at the price of these freedoms are not so precious. Slaves and pet animals can be healthy and secure.

It is not because we value these freedoms less than others that we continue to oppose both war and the preparations for war. It is certainly not because we underrate the power of totalitarian tyranny to extinguish them. Nobody is more alive to the evil of totalitarianism than the pacifist: perhaps nobody is so much alive. For the man who refuses to take part even in a war waged against an armed enemy, at incalculable risk, for a limited number of years, cannot but abominate a war waged incessantly, at no risk whatever, against an undefended minority: and that is a true description of the persecution upon which Communism, like Nazism, depends. We are not conscientious objectors because we believe anything is better than war, but because we believe that nothing is worse.

### The Lesser Evil

The astronomers sometimes tell me that one star is a million times more distant than another a mere billion or so miles away. It may be true—but to me they are equally remote. Distance, beyond a certain limit, my mind cannot make real to itself any more. And so it is with the measurement of evil. I may, in pure theory, concede that persecution is worse, for one reason or another, than the massacre, bereavement and sterilisation of populations by bombing; but I cannot make the difference real: for my conscience condemns one as absolutely as the other—and that is the only authority there is to tell me what is good or evil at all. It can gauge the difference between a "venial" sin—murder is more dreadful to me than theft—but to



"Sold again?"

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## British policy must cease to echo America

THE neck-and-neck race between the Communists and the MRP to become the strongest single party in France has been won by the Communists: but it brings no solution to the political deadlock.

No conceivable combination can give either the Communists or the MRP a controlling position in a government based on a secure majority. Yet another coalition

## Observer's Commentary

government, in which these bitter antagonists participate, seems inevitable. The best to be said for it is that it is less dangerous than the proposed combination of Communists, Socialists and Radicals (whose strength has somewhat revived) which would bring the growing conflict between Left and Right to a danger-point.

The question is whether the MRP and the Communists can combine for any practical purposes of government: above all, perhaps, at the present moment—to impart some stability to the finances of France. The evolution of the French Communist party under the pressure of national necessity is likely to be interesting. They have resemblances to the rebellious Left of the British Labour Party.

### Assorted rebels

THIS has come into the open with a gesture of defiance to the Labour Cabinet—and in particular to Mr. Bevin. Nearly sixty Labour members ranging from Mr. Crossman and Mr. Stokes to Mr. Zilliacus and Mr. Platts-Mills, tabled their amendment to the Address expressing "the urgent hope" that the Government will "review and recast its conduct of foreign affairs."

Since it is impossible to suppose that the four gentlemen I have named would be in close agreement as to the form in which the foreign policy of the Government should be recast, the Manchester Guardian (Nov. 15) is probably near the mark when it says that the grievance common to all the signatories is that their criticisms of Mr. Bevin's policy have been neither properly heard nor properly answered: that in fact the policy is never honestly debated with Mr. Bevin present. That charge, to judge from Hansard, is just. Mr. Bevin too often makes the impression of dealing with the Labour Parliamentary party as he has been used to deal with the Trade Union Congress. The sooner that is mended, the better.

### No clear alternative

ON the other hand it must be confessed that the critics of the Government's foreign policy have not made a very impressive use of what opportunities they have had. Often enough they are well briefed on particular issues—Greece for example. But none of them has succeeded in convincing a deeply perplexed House of Commons that he had a clear conception of that "democratic and constructive alternative to an otherwise inevitable conflict between American Capitalism and Soviet Communism" which the amendment demands from the Government.

The fact of the matter seems to be that nobody, outside the tiny minority which believes that Russia is always right, and that British policy has simply to toe the Moscow

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## PEACE NEWS

3 Blackstock Road, London, N.4  
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All letters on other than editorial matters  
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## TO HELP THE HUNGRY

GERMANY today is a country of orphans. Thousands of children have lost both their parents; millions are fatherless. Besides those whose fathers we killed, are those whose fathers are prisoners—in the heart of Russia for the most part, but many still in this country, neither they nor their families knowing the date of their return.

Those who have looked after bereaved children know something of what that means. For a child, the loss of its parents may be no sharp anguish that time will heal: in very many cases it is the root of a life-long misery, the misery of mental maladjustment and instability. This is so, even when the child is well cared-for.

And these children are not being cared for. Crowded in basements and leaking shelters beneath the ruins of their homes, the children of Germany are starving. Not "starving" in the sense we mean, dear reader, when we dash to the restaurant late for a parcel of fish-and-chips—starving in a sense altogether unknown to the peoples of the fish-and-chip countries: starving to death. And even where death is not the outcome, starvation, too, leaves its own psychological heritage.

Set behind starvation and bereavement, the impotence of defeat and the terror of prolonged bombing: how pitiful, in face of that, sounds all the grand talk of "re-education"! Germany is being re-educated, by a schoolmaster more stern than Hitler himself imposed, except on the children of Buchenwald and Belsen: Neglect, teaching instability, desperation and nihilism. These lessons will not be forgotten.

The children of our 1919 blockade became the storm-troopers of Nazi Germany yesterday. To save a new generation of Germans from that miserable perversion, and of Englishmen from the inevitable repercussions, surely no sacrifice would be too great? To win the war, our air-men were willing to give their lives; to win the peace, must it be said that we are unwilling to give even our loaves?

To divert wheat-shippments from England—it is impossible, unthinkable! So the Government tells us. Are the lives of millions of children really less precious to Englishmen, then, than a slice more bread for breakfast? We do not believe it; nor do you—and if the Government believes it, it is time we told this Government the truth. That, at least, we can do, at the sacrifice only of 2½d.

In the course of his sustained attack in the News Chronicle, Mr. Victor Gollancz revealed (Nov. 18) that a scheme for allowing private food parcels into Germany "seemed certain" to be approved when Mr. Strachey became Minister of Food. Then came bread rationing here—and the whole thing collapsed.

This week Mr. Strachey told the Commons that "the question is again under review." The Minister and, indeed, every Member of Parliament must be left in no doubt as to the strength of public feeling in favour of this tiny gesture.

Write to your M.P. Tell him that you, for one, are ready to put up with a slice or two less, rather than see the children starve. Tell him that even if the Government will not divert food from England, it should allow you to divert some yourself. Individual food-parcels can do little enough to relieve famine; but even such a little helps: and distributed in the spirit of compassion, five loaves and two little fishes have meant more than calories to a multitude. Give them this day our daily bread.

# The die is cast

by

ITHEL DAVIES

FOR the first time in the long history of Great Britain military conscription is to be introduced in peacetime. And it will be the unenviable work of our first Socialist Government with the power freely to execute its will.

It is sad to reflect that the one party in the political history of this country which has built up its strength on opposition to imperialism and militarism, and, in particular, to conscription; which fought against its introduction in 1939; and, before that, against any form of re-armament, is the one whose government has now decided on its introduction.

Not only is there no mandate for it but assurances were given by the Labour Party that conscription would end as soon as practicable after the cessation of hostilities. It is an old political trick for which ex-premier Baldwin was denounced because he embarked upon a policy of re-armament without obtaining the mandate of the electorate. Some of the present Ministers were his most violent assailants. Now Premier Attlee and his Government are practising the same deceit upon the public.

To multiply power is an escape from tackling the root causes of modern wars. It is also a betrayal of the gigantic effort at building up a system of peace such as UNO with its Security Council, Social and Economic Council and so on, symbolises. And is not UNO an organisation of peace-loving peoples? No more inopportune time could have been found for taking the step now contemplated, and nothing could be more disastrous to the attempts

now being made, however inadequately or insincerely, to arrive at *modus vivendi* for peace in the world.

What are the apparent reasons for it? According to the Prime Minister's speech at the Lord Mayor's Banquet on November 9 we have to provide adequate defensive security for ourselves and at the same time provide the wherewithal to contribute our quota as a Great Power to the defensive system of the United Nations. Such arguments are plausible enough and are not unfamiliar but they hide the real situation from view.

Great Britain can no longer afford the role of a Great or World Power. Her place in the hierarchy of Great Powers can only be maintained by placing upon ourselves a disastrous and impossible burden. In the war we called to the forces a higher percentage of our people than either the USA or the USSR and we were able to do that only because of our dependence on Lend-Lease. There was an utter disproportion between our armed and industrial dispositions. And now our occupation forces in Europe and elsewhere in the world are equally disproportionate to our capacity. In order, therefore, to make a noble pretence at power politics and try and preserve her role as a World Power the disastrous expedient of conscription has to be invoked.

If Britain is to live in anything like security and comfort she will have to scale down her commitments very considerably and cease to live beyond her capacity. Conscription cannot possibly solve her dilemma.

procedure in such matters, but that help should be given to the girl and her child I am sure. Protests in the right quarters by Americans would doubtless be effective, but pressure on our own Government to proclaim an amnesty for deserters is also necessary.

R. W. INNOCENT.

20 Lancing Way,  
Croxley Green, Herts.

### Press Initiative

WE think your leading article on the Press might obscure one important fact from readers who do not happen to be well informed on the subject, viz., that the National Union of Journalists, by far the largest professional body concerned, took the initiative in demanding a Royal Commission of inquiry.

G. B. PITTOCK-BUSS.  
IAN CAMPBELL.  
JOHN W. COWLING.

122, Manor Road, N.16.

### The Brains Trust

THE BRAINS TRUST made a sorry exhibition recently in dealing with the Latin tag "si vis pacem para bellum."

Speakers assumed that under most circumstances you are bound to be well armed for defence.

They seemed oblivious to the fact that, in the modern world, preparation for war does not bring peace.

The first World-War was to destroy Prussian Militarism. It produced Hitler. The second World-War was to destroy Hitlerism. It produced the Atom Bomb.

The late Lord Grey out of his bitter experience was in no doubt as to what war-preparation means.

This is what he said after the first Great War.

"Great armaments lead inevitably to war. If there are armaments on one side, there must be armaments on other sides. While one nation arms, other nations cannot tempt it to aggression by remaining defenceless. Each measure taken by one nation is noted and leads to counter-measures by others. The enormous growth of armaments in Europe, the sense of insecurity and fear caused by them—it was these that made war inevitable."

Without all-round disarmament, we risk another war of annihilation. (Rev.) RICHARD LEE.

Westgate, Stokepark,  
Coventry.

### READERS, PLEASE NOTE!

Your subscription: for a year—13s.; for six months—6s. 6d.; for 13 weeks—3s. 3d. Your classified advertisements: they must reach us by Monday each week; displayed ads. by the preceding Friday. Maximum: 4 columns. Your letters: keep them under 250 words.

### BEGGAR'S CHOICE

I DON'T like this panel. It offends my eye, wherever it's placed, and it's hard to write. It's particularly hard when subs. have been falling off, as they have this month: it's so much easier, as well as pleasanter, to say "Thank you" than to beg.

Unluckily, PN cannot get on without the PN Fund, and therefore without the panel, especially now that we're trying to produce a 6-pager every week.

So, if you think this effort worthwhile, please do send what you can, and let next month end on a more cheerful note, as December should, with a hearty "Thank you" on Boxing Day.

THE EDITOR.

Contributions, Nov. 5-18: £15 14s. 5d.  
Total for 1946: £564 3s. 6d.

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Let us consider another aspect. It will take six years before the full results of conscription can be shown. By that time we will have in actual full-time and territorial training just under two million military personnel, and so the position will continue subject to population fluctuations. Compare that with the position and the potentialities of the USSR and the USA. The USSR on the same basis would have between nine and ten millions. Moreover, she has an expanding population and consequently a higher proportion at the conscription age. The same is true of the USA. Then there are China and India with overwhelming potentialities if they also care to tread the same unpromising road.

### Fool's gamble

Not wholly unrelated to the problem is the distribution of the population. Great Britain is over-weighted in population and lacks territorial scope for any adjustment within herself. We are told that there is a shortage of man-power in this country. That can hardly be true except on the basis of a prevailing abnormality in economic conditions. Conscription introduces a further complication into an altogether complex and delicate situation. The density of population in England (excluding Scotland and Wales) is 766 persons to the square mile, the highest in the whole of Europe except the Principality of Monaco. The introduction of conscription, therefore, at this time is bound to aggravate our social evils, and whatever paper records may show, such power will possess none of the social vitality which the mere counting of heads would lead us to expect.

It is a fool's gamble and it has no redeeming feature, for the power it gives is fictitious, and it can deceive no one if the intention is to use it as a bargaining weapon in international discussions. Nor does the history of the 19th and 20th centuries in Europe reveal any possible justification or excuse for planting this upon us now. When we hear from politicians how necessary it is for Britain to give moral leadership for peace to the world, we fall back upon the hackneyed precepts of a warlike epoch which we were hoping would be left behind and forgotten.

Has the spirit of defeated Germany fallen upon us, driving us to the same nemesis? The Prime Minister urges us to work for the state if Britain is to be Great. Mr. Herbert Morrison urges the women to produce more children for the state if we are to continue as a Great Power. The real conflict is between Sterling and Dollar imperialism, and the real fear is lest Communism might spoil it all. Is Conscription the answer? If the Government says so it is hugging an insane delusion.

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# Italian Impressions . . . . by Fredrick Lohr

**I**N the towns round Naples the walls bear eloquent testimony to the chaos of sentiment that passes for politics in Southern Italy. The communists are the most active "signwriters". Their slogans blazon from church tower and cellar hovel. *Non più servi—non più padroni*. Yet surprisingly to me, the monarchist favour is also very energetic judging by the number and size of the inscriptions. *Votate per la Monarchia*. *Patria-Umberto-Liberta*.

The profuse variety of the slogans is both interesting and confusing to the English mind, and that this heterogeneity is representative has been so far borne out in conversations with people of different ages and classes, no one of whom seems to agree with any other—on domestic politics, that is. Everyone is agreed on the major international issue, Trieste! "Italy made mistakes for which it is—shall we say—just that we forgo some African territories; but not Trieste, absolutely no." Trieste is not debatable.

On domestic policy, however, there seems an infinite variety of opinion, and every opinion is a party. The police officials who stamped my registration of sojourn lamented helplessly: "There are too many parties. The government is therefore weak. Nobody respects the law any more. Before, we had order and no liberty; now we have liberty and no order. What is to be done? England, France, America—there is the difference. There is order naturally, and therefore liberty. But in Italy—without a strong law, we are all anarchists!"

## Champions of order

The communists have more influence than is generally believed in England. Their voice is not merely an agitation; they do actually wield administrative power, particularly in municipal affairs. The party is regarded, even by those who hate it, as a symbol of discipline and efficiency. One informant quaintly remarked that though he himself disliked communism, one had to admit that it did offer protection against revolution! What so many southern Italians seem to fear most is an irruption of the "underdogs," led by disorderly and irresponsible agitators. It would seem that there is still much banditry in the country; few people like to journey at night by car.

It sounds strange to hear the Communist party and the Catholic Church bracketed together as champions of order, but stranger still to English ears are the cynical comments offered regarding the Christian Democratic Party, which seems to be supported not so much because there is any real belief in a democratic Italy ("Italy needs a strong Government," is the most usual judgment given me) but in order that it might act as a check to the ambitions of the communists, and also serve as a bargaining buffer between Republican Labour and Socialist Parties.

The church is politically two-faced—monarchic in the south and republic in the north. This was told to me with a lift of the shoulder "...as you must see, a necessary compromise in the conditions of Italy." The conditions of Italy being, apparently, enormously different between north and south. I have heard it argued, seriously and passionately, that the south should secede from the north, and in Sicily there has been for a long time an active separatist movement.

## Immature

The strangest anomalies exist in the minds of many eager ideologists. One can be apparently theoretically monarchist and practically republic—fervently catholic and rabidly anticlerical. This distinction between Christianity and the church is commonly made in England, but I never expected to find it in southern Italy. But it is made with a very real difference. In fact, anti-clericalism is very general, but so far as I can gather, there is almost no anti-religious propaganda or belief. Even the communists are good Catholics, and do not think to remove their lapel badges before going to mass.

Speaking only from a tiny field of observation—small towns surrounding Naples—it seems from English standards that the political sense of the people here is very immature. For

most the struggle for daily bread absorbs the day—and conditions are just now very difficult for all but the new-rich. Rations are very low and everyone must augment these on the "free" market—at ceiling prices.

The Christian Democratic Party makes colourful propaganda in small towns. The churches are used for debate, discussions and exhortations on social and political duties. Led by habited friars, Crucifix and lanterns held aloft, columns file through the streets chanting and singing. It is picturesque but rather unreal. The clerical discipline, I am told, is not really very strong, and where it is accepted it is usually for reasons other than religious.

A great change in the mentality of the southern Italian, particularly the youth, has been effected by the occupation armies. Most Italian youngsters now fix their hopes upon America, bewitched by the glamour of her civilisation. A long conversation with an educated young woman produced these observations: "The

Germans behaved well, everyone a perfect gentleman, but they were too aloof, stiff and formal. We have no complaints to make of them. On the contrary; but they are a different people, not at all like us and we were "race-conscious" with them. For this, we dislike them very much. The English—yes. They are less proud. And the Americans and the Canadians; Ah! them we like tremendously; they are so like us."

This is quite a topical viewpoint. One suspects it is the lavish spending and open-handed generosity of the American and Canadian troops that endears them to these people, as against the frugality and thrift of the Germans. The oftentimes extremely bad conduct of Canadians and Americans is forgotten and their free and easy ways and careless camaraderie are admired.

It seems these people preferred even American bombing to the cool proximity of the Germans. The Americans bombed indiscriminately and irresponsibly—everyone tells me

that. The British were circumspect and careful. The bombing of the RAF is referred to with almost grateful respect. But if the English are respected, the Americans are loved, in spite of their indifferent targetry. For American civilisation there is unbounded admiration. I have not yet spoken to one young person who wants to stay and live in Italy. All dream of emigrating to the States or Canada, where life, it is believed, is rich and free.

Against the lavish display of wealth, and the free informality of American manners, the ancient civilisation of southern Italy seems now to be cramped, bigoted and insufferably dull. This, in my opinion, is a real pointer to the future Italian mentality. Against this invasion the mediaeval propaganda of the church stands no chance. The culture of southern Italy will most probably decay in the monasteries, whilst the present generation of Italian youth sets its course by modern American standards.

## THE ASSASSINATION OF DR. BRIQUENEER

**MICHEL BRIQUENEER** was a member of WRI for more than ten years. A Professor of classical philology and an eminent linguist, his writings appeared in the Belgian journal "Le Rouge et le Noir," and in French pacifist weeklies under the pseudonym of Elie Chimez and Michel de Priene. He also published a number of articles upholding pacifism, and especially the right of conscientious objection. He was a member of national and international peace organisations, and of the Peace Pledge Union.

The following is a résumé of his activities for peace and reconciliation between peoples over the last eight years.

In the small country town of Jodoigne, where he taught, he was exposed both as a pacifist and an individualist to the misunderstanding and calumny of the mob. But this never worried him.

In 1937, during the Spanish Civil War, he took in a small child from San Sebastian. He is now a young man who lives with Madame Briqueneer in Brussels. During the war he received orders to return to Spain for military service, but refused to obey.

## French C.O.s

In 1938, he took in another refugee—a young Austrian Jewess. She lived with him for several weeks and he helped her to leave for America. In 1939, he sheltered French conscientious objectors, one of whom married his daughter. When the war burst upon Belgium in May, 1940, he was arrested with others who thought like him, as a "Communist and pro-German," on the order of the anti-pacifist local Police Chief. Freed several days later, he returned home, and when long lines of prisoners-of-war marched past his house on their way to camp, he hid two Frenchmen and two Belgians, giving them civilian clothes and helping them to return home. Under the Nazi occupation, he firmly maintained his pacifist attitude, declaring his hatred of war and violence, and preached reconciliation. Inevitably, this was considered as pro-German by the Patriots, and pro-Ally by the Nazi collaborators. But his object was to attack the evils of war.

When the Nazis mobilised Belgian workers, he advised his students to avoid forced labour, inviting them to take their last year at the Athénée again and to wait to enter the University until the danger was over. He put his perfect knowledge of German at the service of the non-violent resistance movement, helping about fifty young men to escape forced labour in the factories of the Third Reich. With the aid of several sympathetic Mayors and doctors, he obtained for them false medical certificates and identity cards. Once he was obliged to ask a doctor of Jodoigne and a neighbouring Mayor (both members of the Resistance) to give false papers in order to save a young man. M. Briqueneer did not hesitate to himself go to the "Werbestelle" and returned home after long and difficult discussions with the Germans—with the exemption. Only one exemption was refused. A mission

of this kind, undertaken voluntarily, was not without danger. The Nazis did not like his persistence because each time they lost a man for their war effort and the patriots lost a man for their Maquis.

Offered work near Jodoigne on one of the principal airports, where the "Stukas" took off for England, he was the only one amongst these compatriots to refuse it. The Nazis left him alone. Finally, he left the Flemish movement after it had compromised with the Nazis. His pacifist goodwill was misunderstood by the crowd. Their rancour, his mysterious visits to the "Werbes-

telle," and war psychosis, made them take him, not for the absolute pacifist that he was, but for a dangerous individual in our society based upon violence. That is why five men assassinated him during one of his morning walks in the country with his little grand-daughter, who was left unharmed. He died smiling.

M. Briqueneer always had a good conscience, a pure and irreproachable attitude. He was a man of courage and of goodwill.

## JEAN LE BON

(Translated and abridged from *Pensée et Action*, October, 1946).

## German youth peace manifesto

Appeal to the Military Government.

**ON** our first Peace Day, we, German youth, declare our firm intention to devote ourselves to a peaceful reconstruction, to foster the spirit of mutual regard among nations, and to do all we can to avoid solutions based on force.

At the outbreak of war we were too young to have any influence on the course of events. We were growing up during the war and had to face it in all its cruel hardships and its destruction.

In this appeal we want to contradict the idea that we, the youth of Germany, believe in war, and that we see in it the only possible chance for a solution of international conflict. We stand for a peaceful settlement of all problems affecting the common life of human society, because this method leads direct to reconstruction, whereas war inevitably means destruction.

**WHILE** we solemnly assert our will to peace today, we feel at the same time a sense of frustration, and our present way of living, without peace, depresses us.

It is not for us to put forward any claims, but we want to appeal to those nations which hold the fate of the German people in their hands that they do not miss the opportunity of achieving a true, lasting peace, under conditions that can be borne by us and by all nations.

We cannot see any hope of a constructive building-up of our country, unless a peace treaty be signed in the near future. We urgently ask of you to secure the economic, social and cultural unity of the Reich, without partition of old German territory. A continued prevention of this unity would appear unnatural to us; we are convinced that, should this partition continue, our nation would be unable to live, and therefore would become a permanent burden to the world.

**WE** ask for a postponement of reparations, to enable us to undertake the economic reconstruction of our country, and also to take part in the reconstruction of

the destroyed neighbouring countries.

Please help us to solve the tremendous refugee problem, lest we suffocate in our own living-space. Let our fathers and comrades, who are still prisoners of war, return to us, that they may help us to ease our present terrible plight, and that we may be happily re-united. Help us to provide for our disabled fathers, brothers and comrades, our war-widows and orphans, and ensure that they are not pauperised by being deprived of their pensions.

As we are not only convinced of the absolute necessity of peace, but also of the necessity of a real and lasting peace, we beg you not to manufacture any war-material in our country.

**WE** make this appeal to you not only on material grounds, and because the political and economic fate of Germany is inevitably bound up with that of the world, but we also appeal to your feelings of humanity and social responsibility. Were these actively expressed to our defeated nation, we believe they would bear rich fruit not only for our nation, but for the whole world, thus making a most valuable contribution for securing peace.

\*\*\* The appeal is signed by eight representatives from the main youth groups and clubs of Bad Pyrmont, and further signatures are appended representing organisations in the town catering for youth of both sexes from the age of 14 to 25.

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# CRUELTY AND ABSTRACTION

by D. S. Savage

IF one were asked to define concisely the specific character of our age, one might say immediately that it was an age of totalitarianism and war, and add, more cogently, that in a human sense it was one of *cruelty*. At the back of one's mind would be images of concentration camps, death camps, battle incidents... Taking cruelty as our starting point, let us enquire further into its implications and meaning.

First of all, it is apparent that the phenomena of cruelty are directly associated with totalitarian collectivism, just as that in turn is directly associated with war. The dogma of the supremacy of the state reduces the individual to insignificance. Consequently whole masses of individuals who seem to obstruct the unity of the state may logically be exterminated without impediment.

An enemy of the state is *ipso facto* a non-entity. He is not a "real" being. For if the state is the ground of reality, only he is real who stands in an organic, functional connection with that ground. This movement towards depersonalization finds its culmination in war, when each side gives reality to its own people to the degree to which they subserve the war machine, and denies it absolutely to the other side as a whole. Having made an abstraction of "the enemy," you can proceed with his elimination without scruple.

## "Objectivising"

But cruelty—in its isolated acts—is most in evidence in the totalitarian state prior to its engagement in war; when of course, everything is swept away in an unrestrained flood of cruelty. Now this cruelty may, sometimes, be a passion—a depraved longing for the sensual satisfaction of blood-lust. But the truly terrible thing is that in our time this cruelty has been, so to speak, mechanized. The lust to destroy, to deface, has lost its direct connection with blood and passion and has become abstract, an expression it would seem, of boredom and indifference, a dull commonplace routine.

It is not enough to deplore cruelty, or even to hate it and try to "stamp it out." It is necessary to understand it. And the modern cult of cruelty, I suggest, may be understood in great measure if it is seen in terms, not of its passionate, but its metaphysical origin. From this viewpoint it appears as the outcome of a sense of unreality, of emptiness, abstraction.

Think of it concretely: the prison warder who amuses himself with clubbing a helpless inmate over the ears with a rubber truncheon. The torturer can only do this because he is unaware of his actions, because he cannot grasp the reality of the human being he torments and kills. He is merely dealing with an object, a thing. I grant that this conversion of prisoners into things only removes moral obstacles out of the torturer's way, and that it does not explain the urge towards the positive act of cruelty.

This last we should find, I think, in the prevailing vacuity and boredom generated within an existence given over to complete objectivization; to that enfeebled sense of reality which requires constant stimulation, which in the circumstances can be provided only through a progressive whipping-up of the lust for destruction. The torturer's will becomes more through the victim's becoming less—just as we all find our goodness increased, such is our miserable condition, through each others' sins.

This "objectivising" (i.e., making into things) of other individuals,

Peace News is open for the expression of all points of view relevant to pacifism. Articles in it, whether signed or unsigned, do not necessarily represent the policy of the Peace Pledge Union, of which it is the weekly organ. Nor does the acceptance of advertisements imply any endorsement of, or PPU connexion with, the matter advertised.

however, has as its concomitant a corresponding loss of reality in one's self. You cannot maintain a non-personal relationship with others, and expect to achieve personal reality yourself. Having failed to find your personal reality you proceed, naturally enough, to personalise an abstraction (the nation state) and to make a corresponding abstraction of personalities. Everything is objectivised and therefore unreal, and you are half way down the road to war and hell.

If cruelty is the poison, what is the antidote? A large question, which brings up the whole "crisis of our time." Merely to cry for a return to morality, or even, in the abstract, to "religion," is beating the air.

Very good, very true, very sound: but concretely speaking, what is meant by such a return?

## No panacea

If cruelty is the result of abstraction and if abstraction derives from an ebbing awareness of personal reality, then it follows that abstraction may be overcome by a positive conquest of unreality, by a renewed grasp of personal meaning. Moralization, which includes the recognition of individuals as ends and not means, may follow from that: it cannot precede it. Perhaps it is a pity that there is no general solution, no panacea, which can be applied to the world as a whole, after a certain amount of propaganda, by you, or me, or Mr. Attlee; but there it is.

The task is difficult and unrewarding and not spectacular, its advantage is that it is quite within our power. One must discover one's personal meaning, grasp in all its uniqueness one's personal destiny, relate oneself inwardly to the one source of reality, and for the rest, allow this reality to establish relationships and connections where it will in the world around.

To renounce war is one step, though only one, towards cutting free from the entanglement of abstractions—for the good citizen who is aghast at Buchenwald and apologetic about Hiroshima is certainly chargeable in this particular: that he makes an abstraction of living beings and calls it "the enemy," when we all should know that our enemy is not corporal and does not fight with corporal weapons. Others will judge whether he is also "cruel," but the wounds speak for themselves to the sufferers.

It is fitting, therefore, that as we began by associating modern cruelty with totalitarianism, we should conclude by connecting its antidote with the inwardly-centrifugal individual—with conscience. With conscience: for when I say "individual," naturally I do not mean the isolated monad which the individual mass-man would become if removed from his collective context. I mean that same monad inwardly transformed by that interior decision which enables him to grasp his personal meaning and destiny, into a microcosm—a microcosm existing in and reaching out towards communion with other microcosms.

## Decisive choice

The "crisis of our time" is only at the periphery a "political" struggle. Centrally it is a spiritual one. Man has always been in continual danger of losing, and, indeed, of failing to discover, his sense of spiritual reality, which is synonymous, of course, with his sense of reality itself. Perhaps today we have gone further along this path than ever before, and that is why the human image is disintegrating before our eyes.

It is a mistake, however, arising from a too simple "historical" interpretation of reality, to suppose that we are involved in a crisis which is qualitatively different from that of any past age. We are merely living in an age of the unveiling of the issues implicit in the human situation itself, and we are being faced, in our collective as in our individual lives, with the decisive choice—between Being and Non-being.

# UNO - a museum peace

IF preserving the peace merely involved wrapping it in cotton wool, we shouldn't have to worry how the Museum's Council of Curators was constituted, and whether they actually had the power to do their job without bungling it.

But this new world of technical efficiency is heading for disaster if it is being built on the criminal political inadequacies of the past. The machinery of international collaboration just won't work if it is constructed on unsound lines. To argue that the old 60 h.p. League was all right but that the members would not allow the contraption to work, is like saying that as long as the engine is in working order it doesn't matter if it is connected to the wheels merely with paper chains inscribed "co-operation."

Our new five-cylinder 50 h.p. "United" Nations League is the old chassis with new Dumb Arton Hoax coachwork. Its engine will run on gas generated from Breton wood fuel mixed with hot air, ignited by a Spaak. But the engine does not fire unless the Five Big cylinders synchronise—and they are designed to function independently. The horse power is so harnessed that the horses can, at a moment's notice, all pull in different directions.

To use a different metaphor; does a house of cards gain stability by having two more stories added to it, even if each is as big as the USSR or the USA?

That this description of the San Fiasco Charter is not unfair can be seen from a study of its text and from the manner in which it is functioning. Extraordinary care was taken in drafting it to deprive the organisation of the ability to perform its main duty: "maintain international peace." Decisions will on occasions be arrived at and not carried out; by way of compensation action will at other times be taken without waiting for UNO to make up its mind. Such fickle behaviour is inevitable, since voting procedure is based on the following denials of democracy:—

- (1) Disenfranchise all who do not support their Government for the time being in power;
- (2) Distribute voting power on the basis of one Government one vote, even if this means that 150 million Americans south of the Rio Grande out-vote 150 million Americans north of it by ten to one;
- (3) Disenfranchise entirely the 150 million South Americans and all other citizens of small nations in matters concerning world peace. The General Assembly has not even the right, let alone the power, to do anything except "discuss" matters and "make recommendations," either to the Member Governments or to the so-called "Security" Council.

The "Security" Council cannot make a decision, let alone take action, unless the Big Five are all agreed and two of their stooges vote with them, in which case there would be no need for an organisation to prevent world war, anyway. If they dis-

## Ten Years Ago

Peace News, Nov. 21, 1936.  
"If great Britain and India can come to the point, indicated by the Viceroy in his speech last month to the Assembly at Simla, of an actual 'discarding of the old ideas of imperialism for new ideals of partnership and co-operation', that great result will be reached presumably because an intelligent co-operation has come to be desired and believed in, in both countries; and as the direct fruit of a real effort at right, just, free, and equal dealing."

So said Mr. Carl Heath, in an interview given to "The Friend" before he left London with his wife on a three month's visit to India.

So great has been the demand for seats at the Royal Albert Hall on November 27th., that it may be necessary to have an overflow meeting in Kensington Town Hall.

"It's not enough for us just to say we won't touch war. We've got to remember that pacifism is a moral, a social, and an economic activity. The merely negative pacifism deserves some of the contempt with which it is commonly treated."

—Dr. H. R. L. Sheppard

agree, UNO is paralysed. The new World League may have teeth, but they are false and will drop out if it tries to work its jaws.

UNO will cost the 51 nations combined, per annum, less than it cost the UK alone to wage war for half a day. With this paltry pocket money, raised by voluntary contributions, and armed only with duties, UNO will speedily appear ridiculous by its failure to perform them.

No wonder the British Foreign Minister stated in Parliament:

"I am asked to re-study San Francisco. I have not only re-studied it but, when it was being developed I was gravely concerned whether we were really finding the right solution. . . . We are driven relentlessly along this road: the necessity for a new study for the purpose of creating a world assembly, elected directly from the people of the world as a whole—a world assembly with a limited objective: the objective of peace."

Let us not reject UNO until we have something better. But let us make it quite clear to the statesmen that international law is meaningless unless it is enacted by the directly-elected representatives of the people, and acts directly upon people, through laws which do not have to be OK'd by 51 different parliaments before they are anything better than pious recommendations.

So might our children survive to see the realisation of Tennyson's vision:

"When the war drums throb no longer and the battle flags are furled,  
In the Parliament of Man, the Federation of the World."

Harold S. Bidmead

## "CONSCRIPTION MUST GO IF PEACE IS TO COME"

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# RENOUNCE WAR AND I WILL NEVER SUPPORT OR SANCTION ANOTHER

This pledge, signed by each member, is the basis of the Peace Pledge Union. Send YOUR pledge to

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Dick Sheppard House, Endsleigh St., W.C.1

## THE HUMAN DISHARMONY

The Realm of Art, by Peter Goffin. Lindsay Drummond, 8s. 6d.

WHAT is "natural" is given, but the "artificial" is brought into existence by all those activities which are specifically human. Man lives in these two interacting worlds of reality: the Realm of Nature and the Realm of Art. The uniqueness of the human organism lies in its capacity for art. Through a "given" self-consciousness, which also implies a consciousness of what is not self, humanity gains a power of conscious will and creation.

The activities of Nature produce a universal harmony of being. "The activities of Art—political, industrial, domestic, religious, poetic—seldom appear to interact harmoniously, but rather with discord."

### Rational "triumph"

Peter Goffin argues, as others have argued in different ways, that the disharmony of art is grounded in a disharmony within the human consciousness itself. Men have allowed their rational (objective) knowledge to triumph over their intuitive (subjective) knowledge—the religious or poetic knowledge. The biological development necessary to obtain "the optimum of life," which in the first place was used for life, "as when man made a pot to take and store water so that he might satisfy his thirst, when and where he liked," is now turned against life, and we have the bombing plane and the "mechanistic state."

It is the peoples of the East who, in the great religions, have formulated intuitive knowledge, as the peoples of the West, in their sciences, have formulated rational knowledge. Love is the emotion springing from the intuitions. Plato says, "Love is the desire for generation in the beautiful, both in relation to the body and the soul."

To bring forth one's own being, by the union of the rational and the intuitive, the male and the female principle, as goodness, beauty, and truth—the being with which we are pregnant—is to possess life eternal, without which there is only death: that nothingness, that not-being. Nor, without this root, can anything objective be humanly created good, and beautiful and true.

"The Art of Religion is the Art of Love, and its antithesis is the Art of War."

G. E. R.

## Concert

### STARS AT CHELSEA FOR 'SAVE EUROPE NOW'

SEVERAL Glyndebourne artists appeared at the second Chelsea Town Hall concert organised by Peter Pears and Benjamin Britten in aid of "Save Europe Now," when a varied and interesting programme was given.

The Hurwitz string quartet, which played in the orchestra at Glyndebourne last summer, was making its first solo public appearance. It showed a greater command of the modern than of the classical idiom, but its performance as a whole was of a high standard.

Songs by French composers and Mahler were sung by Miss Nancy Evans. She has an unusual type of voice, light yet dramatic, with an agreeable *mezza voce* and a tonal quality ranging from pure to sombre. In Mahler's song cycle she found occasion, not only for tonal colouring, but also for intellectual interpretation. Mr. Hubert Green-slade's performance at the piano was impeccable.

There are two more concerts in this series: on Nov. 27 Miss Joan Cross and the London Harpsichord Ensemble give a Bach programme, and on Dec. 11 works by Weekes, Byrd, Purcell and Vaughan-Williams will be performed by the New English Singers.

N. B.

### DERBYSHIRE YOUTH CONFERENCE

A CONFERENCE of young people at Great Hucklow, Derbyshire, discussed ways and means of ending conscription recently.

Mr. Don Bateman, ILP, explained that conscription in the past had not saved countries from war, in fact it had helped to kindle its flames. Mr. Bateman held that the bad moral effect the army had on young men outweighed any good effects the physical training and education might have. The strict discipline of the army would stultify for youths just when they were at an impressionable age and needed to think things out for themselves.

Mr. Charles Cole, of the No Conscription Council, listed several things which can be done now if public opinion were to be moved in time. Letters should be written to M.P.s and the Press. People who were against conscription should meet together and form plans for attacking it wherever possible, such as attending public meetings and stating their point of view, supplying speakers to various societies and debating groups, and through personal contact.

It has now been recommended that the committee formed at Great Hucklow should become the nucleus of the recognised Youth Section of the No Conscription Council.

Next Friday (Kingway Hall, 1.15 p.m.) Mr. E. M. King, MP, continues the NPC series of lunch-hour meetings. He speaks on "Japan's destiny." Capt. B. H. Liddell Hart (Dec. 6: "Can War be Limited?") and Tom Harrison (Dec. 13: "The Far East") are the succeeding speakers.

## A modern morality play

### Man - and "Uranium 235"

LONDON (though not the West End) saw its first atomic play last week, when Ewan Maccoll's "Uranium 235" was presented at the Park Theatre, Hanwell, by the experimental Northern Repertory Company, "Theatre Workshop."

This is a brilliant, and largely successful, attempt to dramatise man's search for the secrets of nature, measured against his present predicament.

The search takes us back to Ancient Greece, through the Dark Ages of ignorance and superstition—illuminated by gleams from the alchemists, the monks and the savants—up to the floodlit nineteenth century of Dalton, Curie, Thomson and Rutherford, and the final blinding flash of Atomic Energy let loose on an uncomprehending world.

The author demonstrates, with all the ingenuity of modern stage techniques, that the crux of the matter is the incomprehension.

#### Unpopular truth

The seeker after truth has always been reviled and persecuted by the nine-tenths of mankind which prefers the frenzy of a bacchanale or a jitterbug to the beautiful symmetry of the "electronic ballet" (a brilliantly-conceived fantasia on scientific discovery). So the fruits of knowledge have been exploited in the interests of money and power. He who pays the piper expects to call the tune. "Uranium 235" is only the logical culmination of our indifference to things of the mind, and it is idle to curse the scientist for his efficiency in destruction.

Knowledge is not in itself evil, says Mr. Maccoll—only its misapplication by the "Puppet Master," the figure of Power luring the people to destruction with cheap emotional appeals. Energy, exhibited on the leash like some good-humoured King Kong, is not of its own nature dangerous, and can only act under direction—"if you work for war, I will work with you for war"; but if

### Words of Peace - No. 196

#### NO ISOLATION

Our sick world will not be cured, at this stage, by isolating one or two patients and allowing those who are not so seriously ill to spread the infection. What the world requires is a treatment which would not only deal with external symptoms but with the internal cause of these symptoms, not only with the direct results of bad government—want, unemployment, and international wars—but with civic pride, greed and lust for power which bring about bad governments.

—Emile Cammaerts, in "The Peace that was left."

### STAR - GAZING ?

READERS of Peace News will recall an advertisement which it carried recently, offering in return for 2s. 9d. and information as to date and place of birth, "a scientific horoscope which will amaze you." As a test, we sent to the "astrologer" under my wife's name the relevant information, but instead of giving her own details, we sent those actually applying to her sister.

We received in return a long and highly interesting document, and it certainly fulfilled its claim to amaze us. Not only did it contain several 'contradictions': it completely omitted the highly important information that the person whose birth details were given did in fact die at the early age of 14, very many years ago.

I express the hope that any Peace News readers who in future may have 2s. 9d. to spare, will remember the Peace News or Headquarters funds.

ROGER PAGE.

for peace, the way is open for the Good and Abundant Life.

The play is strongest where it is satirical and symbolic, in the transmutation of Physical Chemistry into something approaching the kind of appeal to touch the bemused imagination and "unbandage the eyes of the mind." As social propaganda it tries to say too much; and much that has already been repeated ad nauseum.

The message is clear. Our exploitation is the price of our ignorance and folly. Science cannot rescue us as long as we are content to remain puppets. We are standing at the crossroads and must choose.

The solution is a little over-simplified. The forked road itself represents a conflict, which can only be resolved by a fusion of blood and brain. Hitherto sense has warred against intellect; now sensibility must make alliance with intelligence, if either is to survive.

M. T.

### DISARMAMENT PARADE

Last Saturday week thousands of people watched three women parading through the West-end streets of London, with posters calling for disarmament. The leading poster declared: "Russia has again proposed disarmament. Let us agree this time!" It was carried by Maude Rowntree, who told Peace News that she received many signs of approval and agreement, one woman, in particular, who had lived in Moscow, remarking on the friendliness of the Russian people.

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#### MEETINGS, &c.

FRIENDS HOUSE, Euston Road, W.C.1, Dec. 3, 7.30 p.m. Public Meeting, Lord Faringdon, Dr. D. O. Soper, Ian Mikardo, MP, Mrs. M. Hides, MP, Mrs. Cecily Cook. Your chance to protest against the Government's Conscription plan. No Conscription Council.

HAMPSTEAD GARDEN SUBURB, Bigwood Tea House, Northway, N.W.11 (buses 102 and 58). Nov. 26, Dec. 16, Jan. 9, 8 p.m. Three addresses on "What is a Christian?" Miss Olive M. Hughes, The Order of the Cross Hampstead Group, Spe. 4937.

HEELEY Friends, Prospect Rd., Nov. 30, Bring and Buy Sale, 3 p.m., Social, 7 p.m. Sheffield PPU.

KINGSWAY HALL, W.C.2, Nov. 29, 1.15 p.m. "Japan's Destiny," E. M. King, MP. Friday lunch-hour meeting. Admission free. National Peace Council.

LIVERPOOL 7, 56 Grove St., Nov. 27, 7 p.m. Gifts invited. Please come. Pacifist Service Unit Christmas Fair. LONDON AREA. At Dick Sheppard House, Sun., Dec. 8, 3 p.m. Area Council, 5.15. Tea followed by Sale and Social. All welcome.

LONDON, W.C.1, 8 Endsleigh Gardens. Discussion lectures every Sun., 7.30 p.m. Nov. 24: "Education and Morality in Russia," John Hewetson. Dec. 1: "Responsibility," C. Donald Wilson (Pioneer Health Centre, Peckham). London Anarchist Group.

## CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

NORTH LONDON Region, Lordship Lane Congregational Church Hall (nr. Wood Green Underground), Sat., Nov. 30, 3.30-10 p.m. Christmas Social, Bring and Buy Sale, Meeting, Children's Party, "Save Europe Now" Exhibition, etc. Openers: Patrick and Doris Figgis. Speakers: Frank Lea, Roy Walker, Roger Page, Alan Myster. Admission free. All proceeds to PPU Autumn Appeal. Programme from Harry Myster, PN, 3 Blackstock Rd., N.4.

PALACE THEATRE, Shaftesbury Ave., W.1. Sun. Dec. 15, 6.30 p.m. "Save Europe Now" £5,000 London Appeal Meeting in aid of Aid to Austria Appeal Committee, Friends Relief Service, Jewish Committee for Relief Abroad, Occasional Refugee Commission, Save the Children Fund. Chairman: Victor Gollancz. Speakers: Robert Boothby, M.P., Frank Byers, O.B.E., M.P., Michael Foot, M.P., Jennie Lee, M.P., Earl Russell, Lt.-Col. R. H. Stevens, R. R. Stokes, M.P. Tickets from Mrs. Peggy Duff, "Save Europe Now," 14 Henrietta St., W.C.2. Tem. 2006.

#### ACCOMMODATION

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#### LITERATURE, &c.

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READ WILL Green's "Questions and Answers on Conscription." 2d. (post 1d.), 1s. 4d. doz., post free, from Jim Le Noury, 4 The Grove, Poolsbrook, Chesterfield.

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## How Russia might be cajoled

'OBSERVER' CONTINUED

line, has accommodated his mind to the truth that Britain is no longer a great Power. Everybody is haunted by the notion that Britain can take an effective initiative in world-affairs, and that somehow she can mediate between USA and Russia, because she is, at least, semi-Socialist.

### The role of mediator

IN the abstract the idea is plausible. Britain's semi-socialism does seem, ideologically, to be about halfway between the communism of Russia and the pretty naked capitalism of the USA. But since the only way British semi-socialism can be impressive in the world-political field is by much closer economic integration with the states of Western Europe, and this is stubbornly opposed by USA on economic and by Russia on political grounds, any attempt at effective action on a middle line leads us into isolation.

Can we reach any more encouraging conclusion if we fasten on the crucial problem of our time—the control of atomic energy? A mediator between USA and Russia on this issue has to aim at two things simultaneously: persuading USA to cease from manufacturing atomic bombs, and persuading Russia to submit, with the rest of the great powers, to inspection. How is Britain to set about this job?

### The atomic crisis

WHILE I am on this point, I should take notice of the criticism of my statement that "the danger to the world's peace comes at the present moment from Russia." Unfortunately, the critic did not indicate how and why it was wrong, but declared it was "a dangerous over-simplification" and left it at that, passing to the more congenial theme of Mr. Molotov's disarmament proposal.

My own view can be simply stated. I believe that by far the most effective contribution to the creation of an atmosphere of peace which it is within the power of any nation to make at the present moment would be the announcement by Russia of her willingness to submit her atomic activities to international control. Nothing prevents Russia from making that gesture. Until it is made, the world will move nearer the danger of war.

### What USA could offer

THE central problem of world-politics today, beside which all others are quite insignificant, is how Russia can be persuaded to make that gesture. If the British Government could persuade the USA that it is worth almost any conceivable

sacrifice to persuade Russia to make this gesture, then it would have taken the first great step in effective mediation.

But it is no use deluding ourselves. Britain herself has practically nothing to offer Russia. USA has. She could offer large-scale economic help; she could offer to place the innumerable military bases she has acquired in the Pacific under UN trusteeship. Britain is in no position to exert any pressure at all on USA to do these things, but she could appeal to the USA to do them. And that would be a welcome change in British policy. But it does not amount to an initiative: Britain does not possess the power for that.

### American reaction

WHAT is imperative is that Britain should break away from her sheepish following of USA. That is likely to lead to real disaster; and the Republican victory has knocked the bottom out of the only strong argument for it: our need of American financial assistance. The Republicans voted almost solidly against the British loan. Now that they are in power, there is no hope of favours to come for ourselves.

The latest and worst manifestation of this following of USA is our support of its opposition to Mr. La Guardia's proposal of a United Nations International Food Fund—really to carry on the food-relief work of UNRRA for another year. The American counter-proposal is that credits shall be granted from one nation to another: in other words, that the countries within the Russian zone shall get nothing from USA.

Why, say the Americans, should we supply food to countries where Russian influence has prevented the formation of "genuinely democratic" governments? It sounds reasonable enough. And there is no doubt that Russian intransigence has made the average American only too susceptible to the argument that to finance relief through UN is merely to help to consolidate Russian power, in countries which do not welcome it.

### Food relief the test

NEVERTHELESS, if ever there were a matter on which USA should be pressed to reconsider its attitude, it is this. If the United Nations cannot act together to give food-relief to Europe, it is hard to believe they will ever act together on anything. Stalin has said that Russia is willing to have the fund administered by an international agency. Why not take him at his word? Why not propose that the international agency should be staffed in the same proportion that the nations contribute to its funds, so that Americans would have the principal supervision of relief in White Russia and the Ukraine?

Anyhow, the British government should withdraw its support for a policy for food-relief only to those countries which are outside the Russian zone. That is the old, pernicious game of using food-relief as a weapon against Bolshevism.

This is a good example of the kind of initiative which Britain can take—in making that appeal to USA to be generous towards Russia on which so much depends. What better way of reconciling Russia to international inspection of its atomic activities now offers than to begin with international administration of food-relief in Russia, mainly supplied by USA?

### Britain's impulse

THERE is not much hope for these things with USA in her present mood, which Russia has done so much to create. Russian policy, as shaped by Molotov, has been a catastrophic fiasco. But Britain cannot possibly afford to accept the dismal situation that has ensued: sheer self-preservation compels her to do her utmost to mitigate the mounting antagonism.

Military conscription for a country in Britain's position is economically disastrous. Why not try an offer of unilateral disarmament?

## ROCKET BOMB TESTS IN AUSTRALIA

ACCORDING to the Australian Associated Press, a Military Mission has recommended to the British Government that rockets be fired from Stuart Range in South Australia, in a line to the 90-mile beach in the N.W. of Western Australia. Observation stations are to be built every hundred miles. This line runs directly through the Great Central Aborigines' Reserve and according to this plan, at least three of the observation stations will be built on the Reserve.

Most of the rockets would be fired at a distance of 300 to 400 miles. Every rocket fired at that range will land in the Aborigines' Reserve. It is also proposed to build a settlement on the Reserve, which would disrupt the life of the natives.

The Aborigines are a minority race. The Central Reserve is their last stronghold. The Atlantic Charter, which Australia signed, would be violated by this project.

The Adelaide Meeting of the Society of Friends has protested in the Australian Press, asking for support from public men "with such moral and spiritual force that this abomination may be prevented."

## CHRISTMAS AMNESTY DRIVE IN USA

POINTING out that "Christmas, the traditional occasion for amnesties, is approaching," Dr. Walter W. Van Kirk of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America, has called on all church social action secretaries and executives of city and state councils of churches to write President Truman urging an amnesty for American C.O.s.

"He will be more likely to do this if he is made to feel that such action would meet with approval of the religious leadership of the nation," said Dr. Van Kirk. "You may already have written to the President on this matter. If so, may I earnestly suggest that you write again recommending a Christmas amnesty."

The appeal cited the Federal Council of Churches' amnesty resolution adopted last March and listed other church groups and denominations which support an amnesty. It pointed out that "there are some 1,000 conscientious objectors still confined to federal prisons" and that "5,000 other objectors who have already completed their prison terms undergo continued punishment through loss of valuable civil rights."

## "Conscience clause" threat: C.B.C.O. write to Attlee

PASSAGES in Mr. Attlee's speech in introducing the Government's conscription proposals to the House on Nov. 12 seemed to lend colour to the rumour that under the new Bill there might be no unconditional registration for COs.

An emergency meeting of the Executive Committee of the Central Board was therefore called for Nov. 15, as a result of which a detailed Memorial was sent to the Prime Minister that evening. Copies have been sent to other members of the Government.

## Calling Reading readers!

Reading "Save Europe Now" parcels depot is in need of help. The already much too busy Committee cannot cope with the present rush of parcels. If anyone in the Reading area has a few spare hours per week, they should write to the Hon. Secretary, 94, Southampton Street, Reading, or call at Friends House, Church Street, any Wednesday at 7.30 p.m.

Reading also want names of people who will "adopt" a German family. This means obtaining the necessary labels from "Save Europe Now," and sending the parcels to the family of a POW. Names will be supplied.

## PN at Trafalgar Square

PPU Trafalgar Square demonstrations are, by tradition, occasions of mass Peace News selling in London's West End.

Tomorrow (Saturday) will be no exception, and we ask all who can help to report from 2.0 p.m. onwards for a pitch and supplies to Sidney Billson who will be selling at the foot of St. Martin's steps. A good muster of sellers will help in attracting a large crowd to the meeting.

## Why we should renounce war

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE)

upon to commit them: "cease to do evil, learn to do well."

The command of conscience is to render good for evil. Pacifists are told—they are weary to death with being told—"Ah yes, your course might have been all right in the time of the Hohenzollerns, say, who after all were comparatively civilised, but in face of a Hitler (or Stalin)..." This argument is utterly false. Translated into plain English, it means, "while a high level of Christian conduct is required to meet a moderate villainy, against sheer enormity only a very low one will prevail."

The exact contrary is the truth. The greater the evil, the greater the good required to meet it. A Mazzini may be enough to shake the authority of a Metternich; a Nero demands martyrs like St. Peter and St. Paul. Against the doctrine of the "lesser evil," which has reduced itself finally to absurdity, the time has come to pit that of the "greater good."

It is not because we underrate the evil of totalitarian tyranny, but because we realise it only too well, that we oppose, now as in 1939, the steps being taken by Britain and America to resist it. We do not know all the consequences of conscientious objection; but we do know this much, that it frees a man for ever from fighting with the Bible in one hand and the sword in the other, bringing discredit upon both. If the enemies of freedom have in truth discarded the Bible and laid both hands on the sword, it is the more needful that we should discard the sword and lay both hands on the Bible.

### All hands needed

Conscientious objection frees a man, and binds him, to devote the whole of his life and energy thenceforth to the rebuilding of our stricken society, in the "spirit of Christ." Two hands are needed for that. Look at the world today once more, and ask yourself whether all hands are not needed.

We do not know whether such a society would be allowed to survive. We believe it might: it might so transform the face of the world as to deprive aggressors of the power, together with the excuse, for violence. But even were it crucified at the hands of those who have stifled their conscience, we are convinced that the effort would not have been in vain.

The spirit would triumph, even though the body were destroyed; civilisation would bloom again among the ruins as it has bloomed before, where the blood of the martyrs proved to be the seed of the Church.

## ADVISORY BUREAUX

SHREWSBURY—R. Barrie, now at East-rear, Bryn Road, Shrewsbury.

SOUTHPORT—Individual Advisor now: Harold Haslam, 158 Scarisbrick New Road, Southport.

NORTH WALES REGIONAL BOARD—W. Meurig Meulwyn Hughes, now at 29 Madryn Avenue, Rhyl.

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